

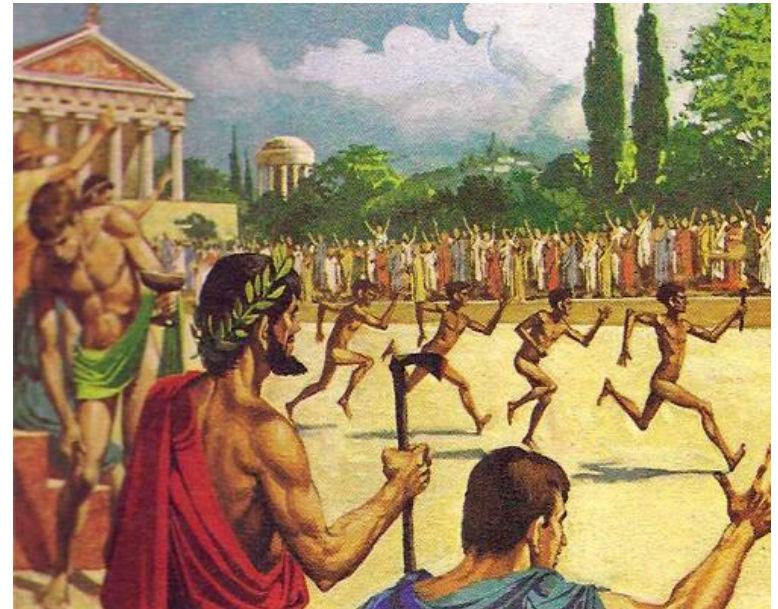
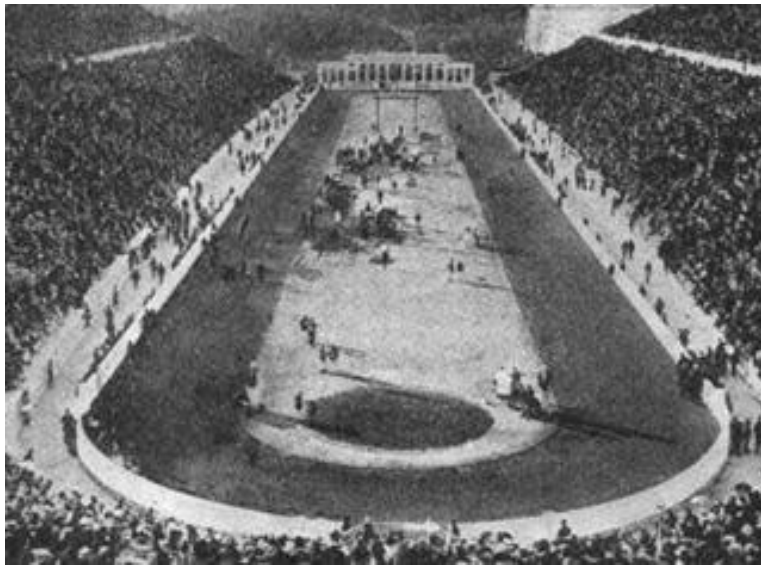
Olympic Games



The world's greatest international sports games are known as the Olympic Games. The Olympic idea means friendship, fraternity and cooperation among the people of the world. The Olympic Movement proves that real peace can be achieved through sport. The Olympic emblem is five interlinked rings: blue, yellow, black, green and red.



The original Olympic Games began in ancient Greece in 776 B.C. These games were part of a festival held every fourth year in honor of God Zeus at the place called Olympia. It was a great athletic festival, including competitions in wrestling, foot racing and chariot racing, rowing and others. The games were for men only.



The first modern Olympic Games were held in Athens in 1896. Then they were resumed in London after the Second World War. Since then the Olympics are held every fourth year in different countries. The ancient Greeks had no winter sports. Only in 1924 the first Winter Olympic Games were held in France, Now they are being held regularly.



The Olympics have a very long history. They began in 776 B. C. and took place every four years for nearly 1200 years at Olympia, in Greece. The decree of that time was that there should be no wars during the Olympiad. At first the Olympics lasted only five days and the competition was only in running. The Olympic programme grew as the games developed and a lot of sports events were added: long-distance, racing, wrestling, the pentathlon, horse-back racing, etc.



The only prize for each contest was a garland of wild olive. The successful athlete, however, received other rewards. His friends and admirers showered him with flowers and costly gifts. His name was recorded in the Greek calendar. Poets sang his praises and sculptors carved his statue. An Olympic prize was regarded as the crown of human happiness.



Women, foreigners and slaves were forbidden to compete. When the Greeks lost their authority and became dependent on Rome the games almost stopped existing. They lasted till 394 A.D., when the Roman Emperor Theodosius I abolished them on the grounds that they were of pagan origin. Theodosius dismantled the Temple of Zeus and destroyed Olympia. Fifteen hundred years later, in 1894, a Frenchman, Baron Pierre de Coubertin, persuaded people from fifteen countries to start the Olympic Games again. His words "It's a great honor to win, but still a greater honor to compete" became an Olympic motto.



Thanks for attention

